



MEA Alternate Mathematics and ELA/Literacy

Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA)

**2016 Guide for
Score Report Interpretation**

State Specific Information

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Introduction to the MSAA

Purpose

The Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) is a comprehensive assessment system designed to promote increasing higher academic outcomes for students with significant cognitive disabilities in preparation for a broader array of post-secondary outcomes. The MSAA is designed to measure academic content that is aligned to and derived from Maine's content standards. This test contains many built-in supports that allow students to use materials they are most familiar with and communicate what they know and can do as independently as possible. The MSAA is administered in the areas of ELA and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11.

This assessment was developed through the research and development completed by the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) and has been carried forward by the MSAA State Partners. MSAA is currently being administered by eleven participating states: Arizona, Arkansas, Maine, Maryland, Montana, the Pacific Assessment Consortium (PAC-6)^[1], Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee and Washington, DC.

This guide provides information regarding the administration and results of the spring 2016 MSAA to district and school personnel.

[1] The Pacific Assessment Consortium (including the entities of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Republic of Palau, and Republic of the Marshall Islands) are collectively considered one state, led by the University of Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (CEDDERS).

Student Participation

The criteria for student participation in the MSAA reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining who should participate in this assessment. The table below shows the participation criteria and the descriptors used to determine eligibility for participation for each student.

Students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability.	Review of student records indicates a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.* *Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the State's Content Standards.	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade-level State's Content Standards and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum.	The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature, and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings.

Assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities rely on a foundation of communicative competence. Students who do not have receptive and expressive communication are unlikely to be able to demonstrate what they know and can do on an assessment. Students who do not have a mode of communication are identified during the assessment process. Teachers may use the Communication Toolkit developed by NCSC to help these students develop a mode of communication. The toolkit can be found here: https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Communication_Tool_Kit.

Overview of the MSAA

The MSAA assesses English language arts (reading and writing) and mathematics at grades 3-8 and 11 and is aligned to Maine’s content standards and the MSAA Core Content Connectors. The MSAA is a computer-based, on demand assessment consisting mostly of selected response and some constructed response items written at four levels of complexity. These complexity levels represent different levels of skill acquisition by students.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities often need materials and instructional strategies that are substantially adapted, scaffolded, and have built-in supports to meet their individual needs.

The MSAA levels of complexity are designed to follow instructional practices. When students begin to learn a new skill, or acquire new knowledge, they need more support. As students learn and develop mastery of that skill or knowledge, they need less support. The test items on the MSAA are developed with many scaffolds and supports embedded within the items. Supports not embedded in the test items may be provided as accommodations, as well as other allowable ways to present the item to a student, based on their individual requirements.

The assessment is designed to be administered one-on-one, online, or in a paper-pencil format. The needs of the student may also be addressed through other supports and accommodations such as: reading the test aloud, having a scribe, using manipulatives, object replacement, translating the test into ASL, among others.

Each content area consists of 30-40 items that are mostly selected response. The writing portion of the ELA test contains a scaffolded writing prompt at each grade level. Each content test is divided into test sessions. Test administrators have substantial leeway in developing a testing schedule with the ability to start and stop a test depending on the engagement of the student.

Scoring

Scoring of most items is accomplished within the online test platform. The selected response items are scored as correct or incorrect by the test platform based on the answer keys programmed into the system. Other constructed response items are scored by the Test Administrator and then marked correct or incorrect in the test platform. Items without responses receive a score of zero.

The writing prompts at each grade level were field tested this year. Student responses are hand-scored. Results from the writing prompts will not be included on score reports and are not part of the overall ELA score for the 2015-16 year.

MSAA Score Reports

Overview

This guide describes the types of score reports provided for the 2015-16 MSAA administration. The data in the sample reports are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to reflect performance of any student(s).

Please remember that test data constitute a single source of information and should be used along with other relevant information on student performance, e.g., IEP progress reports, diagnostic assessments, class work, and report cards.

Information included on the score reports:

- *Performance Levels* describe how the student performed in relation to the knowledge and skills of that content area and grade level. Each performance level has two components: the scale scores that make up each level and the performance level descriptors. The performance level descriptors are broad and general statements regarding skills and abilities of students who have attained each level. Performance levels for the MSAA were established by committees of educators after the first NCSC administration of the assessment in 2015. Performance level descriptors for each content area and grade level can be found in Appendix B of this document. The scale score ranges that make up each performance level can be found in Appendix B.
- *Scale scores* report the performance level the student achieved. Scale scores are more precise than performance levels and may be used to make comparisons between groups of students, schools, and districts. Table 1 on page 16 shows the scale score ranges for each performance level, content area, and grade level.
- *Descriptive and informative reports.* In addition to including student demographic information, performance level, and scale scores, the Individual Student Report contains supportive information about student performance and MSAA measures.

Interpreting and Using the MSAA Scores

The MSAA tests student performance in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, based on States Content Standards. The student's performance level is based on alternate achievement standards. Results for the MSAA are reported by a scale score and performance level for each content area.

MSAA scores should be used in conjunction with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) progress reports, student work, diagnostic assessments, district-required assessments, and report cards in order to place the student's performance on academic content and skills in context and to provide a complete picture of the student's progress across a wide range of categories.

It is helpful to read the Performance Level Descriptors to understand the expectations for the performance level and grade level for each student. This information can provide a concrete link from the test to instructional planning.

Talking to Parents and Guardians

When talking to parents and guardians about their child's score, it may be helpful to keep the following in mind:

- The MSAA is a new or fairly new alternate assessment this school year for states, and we recognize that student achievement may differ between MSAA and the previous state assessments for ELA, Mathematics, and Writing.
- Previous state assessments measured the old state standards whereas MSAA measures progress toward post-secondary options using the new Core Content Connectors; which are aligned to the States' Content Standards.
- Do not compare results in ELA and mathematics from previous state alternate assessments, unless you were part of the NCSC assessment, with the results of MSAA because they are different tests that measure different standards.
- The MSAA assessments are based on higher learning standards than states have had before, and the MSAA assessment results are still a new baseline for all states.
- MSAA assessment results should be used along with local assessment results and other information to determine what changes in curriculum and instruction may be needed to support students learning.
- MSAA scores alone should not be used to make placement or eligibility decisions.

Special Reporting Codes and Messages

In some cases students were assigned a special reporting code. A complete list of special reporting codes and their associated descriptions is provided below. For additional information or interpretation of special reporting codes, contact your State MSAA Coordinator.

Test Status		
Code	Test Status	Description
ESR	Early Stopping Rule	If the TA did not observe a student response after the presentation of 4 items, the test was closed by the TA
ESM	Early Stopping Rule Misadministration	Testing may have ended early on the basis that a consistent mode of communication was not observed. At least one response was recorded for the student, but the student may not have had the opportunity to complete the entire test.
INC	Tested - Incomplete	The student's test was not submitted by the close of testing. The student may not have had the opportunity to complete the entire test.
ELL	ELL Exempt (ELA Only)	The student was exempt from ELA testing due to being a first year English Language Learner.
EXE	Exempt (Emergency, Medical, Other)	The student was exempt from testing.
DNT	Did Not Test	The student did not test via the MSAA assessment.
WDR	Withdrew	The student withdrew.
NLE	No Longer Eligible	The student is not eligible to test via the MSAA assessment.

Types of Score Reports

Below are the types of MSAA score reports that will be available on the MSAA Reporting Portal. Only District testing coordinators using their current MSAA username and password may access the MSAA reports here: <https://www.msaaassessment.org> under the Reporting Tab. All MSAA score reports are confidential documents.

- Reports for the District
 - District Summary Report

- Student Results File CSV
- Reports for the School
 - School Summary report
 - School Roster Report
 - Student Results File CSV
 - Individual Student Report

If you have any questions about accessing these MSAA reports, contact your State MSAA Coordinator. Contact information can be found at the beginning of this document.

Student Results File CSV

A CSV file of all student results will be available to District Test Coordinators through the MSAA Reporting Portal. For information regarding this file, contact your State MSAA Coordinator.

Testing Participation Requirements by Content Area

All students in grades 3 – 8 and 11 are required to be assessed in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Participation Status is assigned independently for ELA and mathematics.

All Submitted tests receive a Participation Status, regardless of the number of item responses.

For additional information regarding the reported test status, contact your State MSAA Coordinator. Contact information can be found at the beginning of this document.

Reports for District

District Summary Report

The *District Summary Report* (DSR) provides district staff with a summary of student participation and performance by district and school. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Sample District Summary Report

1 English Language Arts

SUMMARY REPORT Demonstration State Demonstration District B

3		Enrolled	4 Tested	Did Not Test	Average Scale Score	Performance Level							
						Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4	
						N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grade 03	State	9	2	7	1241	1	50	0	0	1	50	0	0
	District	1	0	1									
Grade 04	State	10	5	5	1232	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0
	District	3	1	2	1236	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
Grade 05	State	10	8	2	1241	3	38	1	13	3	38	1	13
	District	2	2	0	1226	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
Grade 06	State	10	5	5	1236	2	40	2	40	1	20	0	0
	District	3	1	2	1228	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 07	State	10	8	2	1249	3	38	0	0	1	13	4	50
	District	2	2	0	1255	1	50	0	0	0	0	1	50
Grade 08	State	10	9	1	1247	1	11	3	33	2	22	3	33
	District	3	2	1	1256	0	0	1	50	0	0	1	50
Grade 11	State	10	10	0	1261	1	10	1	10	3	30	5	50
	District	2	2	0	1252	0	0	0	0	1	50	1	50

The District Summary Report contains the following features, highlighted above:

1. Content Area of the report.
2. State and District included in the report.
3. Summary of results by Grade Level. The state and district data shown here are other third graders in the state and district.
4. Number of students Enrolled, Tested, Invalid and Did Not Test, and Average Scale Score by State, District and School. Refer to the Special Reporting Codes and Messages for information regarding test status.
5. The number and percentage of students at each performance level by grade in the state, district.

Reports for the School

School Summary Report

Figure 2 – Sample School Summary Report



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1 English Language Arts

2 SUMMARY REPORT

Demonstration State
Demonstration District A
Demonstration School 1

3		4				5		Performance Level							
		Enrolled	Tested	Did Not Test	Average Scale Score			Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4	
								N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grade 03	State	9	2	7	1241	1	50	0	0	1	50	0	0		
	District	8	2	6	1241	1	50	0	0	1	50	0	0		
	School	3	0	3											
Grade 04	State	10	5	5	1232	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0		
	District	7	4	3	1231	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0		
	School	4	2	2	1233	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0		
Grade 05	State	10	8	2	1241	3	38	1	13	3	38	1	13		
	District	8	6	2	1245	2	33	0	0	3	50	1	17		
	School	3	2	1	1246	1	50	0	0	0	0	1	50		
Grade 06	State	10	5	5	1236	2	40	2	40	1	20	0	0		
	District	7	4	3	1238	1	25	2	50	1	25	0	0		
	School	3	1	2	1236	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0		
Grade 07	State	10	8	2	1249	3	38	0	0	1	13	4	50		
	District	8	6	2	1247	2	33	0	0	1	17	3	50		
	School	4	2		1244	1	50	0	0	0	0	1	50		
Grade 08	State	10	9	1	1247	1	11	3	33	2	22	3	33		
	District	7	7	0	1244	1	14	2	29	2	29	2	29		
	School	3	3	0	1243	1	33	1	33	0	0	1	33		
Grade 11	State	10	10	0	1261	1	10	1	10	3	30	5	50		
	District	8	8	0	1263	1	13	1	13	2	25	4	50		
	School	3	3	0	1283	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	100		

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The School Summary Report contains the following features, highlighted above:

1. Content Area of the report.
2. State, District and School included in the report.
3. Summary of results by Grade Level. The state and district data shown here are other third graders in the state, district and school.
4. Number of students Enrolled, Tested, Invalid and Did Not Test, and Average Scale Score by State, District and School. Refer to the Special Reporting Codes and Messages for information regarding test status.
5. The number and percentage of students at each performance level by grade in the state, district and school.

School Roster Report

The school roster report provides student performance information at the school level for each grade, including each student's test status, scale score and performance level. See Figure 2 below.

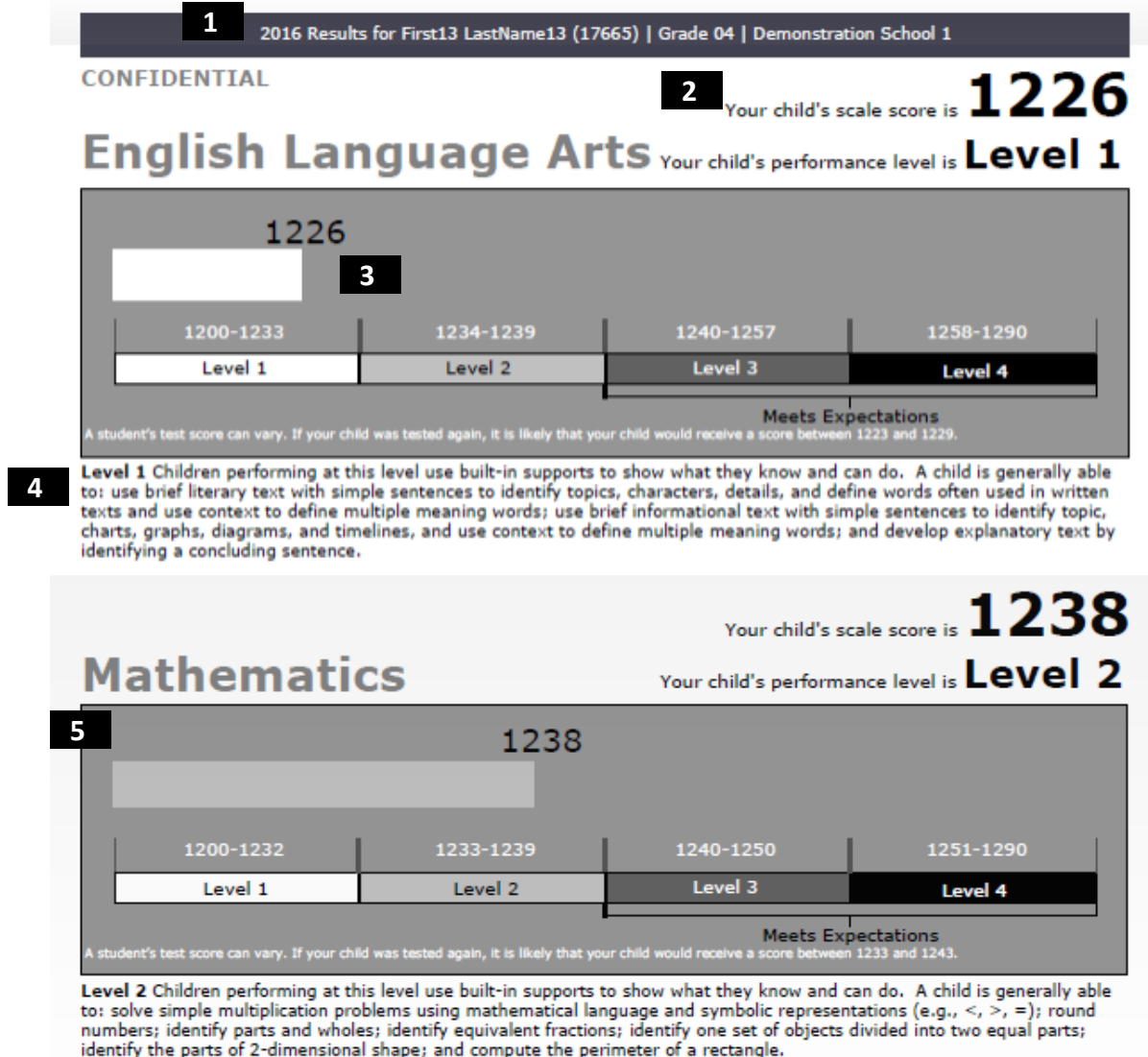
[illegible]

1. The state, district and school included in the report.
2. The results are displayed by Content Area.
3. A summary of enrolled and tested students and the average scale score for the state, district and reported school.
4. This section of the report includes all students tested at the school for the specified grade.
5. For each content area the student's test status, comparison to other students in the same grade level in the state, scale score and performance level is displayed.
6. This key shows symbols used in the "State Compare" column.

The Individual Student Report provides scale score and performance level information for a specific student. Figure 3 shows page 2 of the Individual Student Report. A full sample is included in Appendix

A.

Figure 4 – Sample Individual Student Report



The Individual Student Report contains the following features, highlighted above:

1. The report header includes the student's full name, student ID, Grade and School.
2. The student's scale score and performance level for each content area is shown.
3. This display shows the student's score compared to the performance level scale.
4. This text shows the performance level descriptor for the student's performance level.
5. The results for each content area are displayed separately on the report.

Appendix A

Individual Student Report



Spring 2016 English Language Arts and Mathematics Results for [STUDENT NAME]

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This report shows your child's scale score and achievement level for the 2016 Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy.

The MSAA is a collaborative group of states that have partnered to develop and administer the MSAA, Maine's online alternate assessment for Mathematics and ELA for grades 3 – 8 and 11. The MSAA is designed to assess students with significant cognitive disabilities and measures academic content that is aligned to and derived from Maine's content standards. The test contains many built-in supports that allow students to take the test using materials they are most familiar with and to communicate what they know and can do as independently as possible. These are some of the built-in supports found in the MSAA.

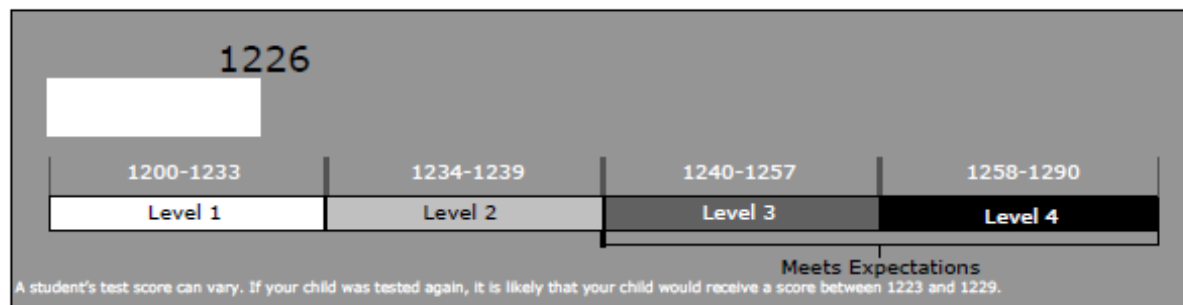
- shortened ELA reading passages
- pictures, charts, tables, and maps to help students understand the reading passages
- models and examples that explain important ideas and concepts that students can use during the ELA and mathematics tests
- common geometric shapes such as circles, triangles, and squares
- smaller numbers on the mathematics tests
- the option to have the entire test read aloud

In order to support communication independence to the greatest extent possible, the MSAA is designed to work with different communication modes and systems. Please discuss the supports your child used on the MSAA with your child's teacher.

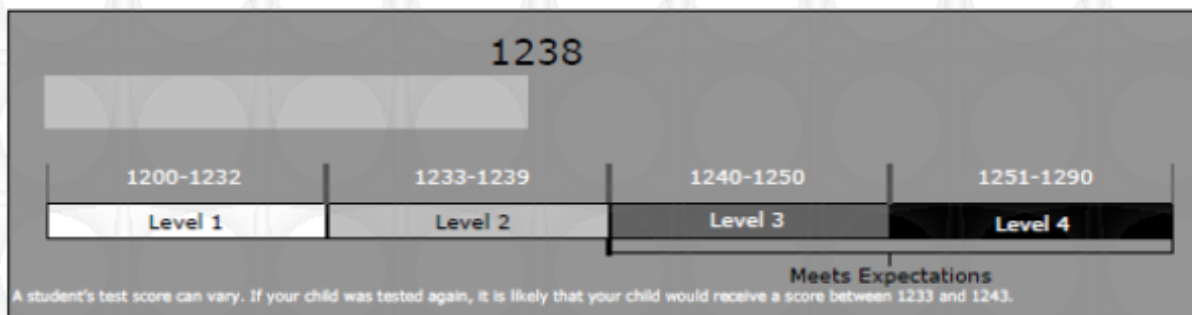
On the following pages, the scale score and achievement levels for each content area summarizes your child's performance on the mathematics and ELA/literacy . The academic level descriptors describe the knowledge and skills that children who perform at this level generally demonstrate.

You can find more information and resources for helping your child by talking to your child's teacher.

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Your child's scale score is **1226****English Language Arts** Your child's performance level is **Level 1**

Level 1 Children performing at this level use built-in supports to show what they know and can do. A child is generally able to: use brief literary text with simple sentences to identify topics, characters, details, and define words often used in written texts and use context to define multiple meaning words; use brief informational text with simple sentences to identify topic, charts, graphs, diagrams, and timelines, and use context to define multiple meaning words; and develop explanatory text by identifying a concluding sentence.

Your child's scale score is **1238****Mathematics** Your child's performance level is **Level 2**

Level 2 Children performing at this level use built-in supports to show what they know and can do. A child is generally able to: solve simple multiplication problems using mathematical language and symbolic representations (e.g., $<$, $>$, $=$); round numbers; identify parts and wholes; identify equivalent fractions; identify one set of objects divided into two equal parts; identify the parts of 2-dimensional shape; and compute the perimeter of a rectangle.

Table 1**2016 Performance-Level Scale Score Ranges by Content Area and Grade**

Performance Level	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 11
English Language Arts							
Level 4	1251-1290	1258-1290	1256-1290	1253-1290	1255-1290	1250-1290	1255-1290
Level 3	1240-1250	1240-1257	1240-1255	1240-1252	1240-1254	1240-1249	1240-1254
Level 2	1234-1239	1234-1239	1232-1239	1231-1239	1236-1239	1230-1239	1236-1239
Level 1	1200-1233	1200-1233	1200-1231	1200-1230	1200-1235	1200-1229	1200-1235
Mathematics							
Level 4	1254-1290	1251-1290	1255-1290	1249-1290	1254-1290	1249-1290	1249-1290
Level 3	1240-1253	1240-1250	1240-1254	1240-1248	1240-1253	1240-1248	1240-1248
Level 2	1236-1239	1233-1239	1231-1239	1234-1239	1232-1239	1234-1239	1234-1239
Level 1	1200-1235	1200-1232	1200-1230	1200-1233	1200-1231	1200-1233	1200-1233